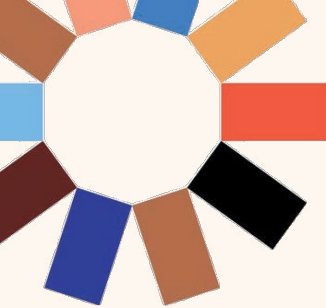




Inclusive Design Standards A Tool to Advance Housing for Municipalities

The Inclusive Design Standards offer design and operations recommendations for municipalities to support the creation of disability-forward housing. This practical toolkit can help towns, cities, and counties think about going beyond code with a cross-disability approach to multi-family housing.

About

In the United States, 26% of people have a disability, yet it's estimated that less than 6% of the national housing supply is designed to be accessible. As housing communities are created, they don't often meet the diverse accessibility and inclusion needs of people with disabilities. While code sets the baseline for what's required, no holistic guidelines define an implementable, progressive approach to creating truly accessible and inclusive housing. Municipalities have a critical role in advancing housing for all their residents with and without disabilities.

The Kelsey, a disability-forward housing organization, has released the first version of a new national standard and tool: the [Inclusive Design Standards](#). These are a curated source of over 300 elements that support design choices, development strategies, building features, or operational policies that prioritize accessibility and inclusion for designers, developers, property managers, and community members to advance disability-forward housing in their communities. Using the Inclusive Design Standards eliminates the need to start from scratch with every project, and their use helps create more accessible and adaptive building environments for all. Municipalities can advance housing access for their residents by utilizing the Inclusive Design Standards, either through embedding their use into program and policy criteria or adopting stand-alone elements of disability-forward design.

Highlights

- **Cross-Disability** to support access and inclusion for the broad and diverse needs of people with disabilities.
- **Multidimensional** to address the many elements of housing development, design, and operations that impact accessibility and inclusion.
- **Implementable and Focused on Value Creation** with clear and adoptable recommendations that have been curated to ensure accessibility. Also supports a better, more efficient, equitable building development.

Learn Center Resources

These are some of the free resources available at thekelsey.org/learn :



Municipality Spotlights

Washington, D.C.

Washington D.C. offered maximum points in its 2023 QAP (Qualified Allocation Plan) for projects that receive Inclusive Design Standards certification at the Silver, Gold, or Platinum level. They awarded additional points for projects in which all units met the requirements for Type A (accessible) units or for projects that included twice the required number of accessible and sensory units as required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

San Jose, CA

The City of San Jose Housing Department offered extra points in their 2023 NOFA for those seeking funding for affordable housing if they committed to doing two things: providing an additional 10% of accessible units beyond the Building Code minimum and/or conducting an Inclusive Design Workshop with people with disabilities to provide feedback and recommendations on building design.

Teton County and the Town of Jackson, WY

The Housing Department of Teton County and the town of Jackson, Wyoming, have an existing set of Livability Standards to help ensure new housing is functional and comfortable for future inhabitants. In an upcoming iteration, they plan to incorporate elements from the Inclusive Design Standards to ensure new builds and rehabs will be more accessible to a variety of access needs. In a past RFP for a town-controlled housing site, the Housing Department asked developers to incorporate “inclusive and accessible features” referencing the Inclusive Design Standards as a resource to responding teams.

San Antonio Housing Trust

San Antonio, with help from The Kelsey, supported its newly formed Sustainable and Universal Committee in developing a set of Multi-Family Universal Design Standards for new affordable housing construction. The standards cover site design, building components, and dwelling units and specify several requirements that make housing more accessible.

Contact

To arrange an introductory conversation, please email design@thekelsey.org